



**June 2013**



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Town  
Manager

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**Strategic Planning  
Retreat at Kimball Farm  
June 20 5:30-8:30 PM**

**Electronics Recycling  
Collection  
Saturday, June 22  
28 North Street  
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**Massachusetts**

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**2013 Website**

**Award Winner**



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**Dear Westford Residents,**

Thank you to our Board of Selectmen, Chairman Kelly Ross, State Representative Jim Arciero, and State Senator Eileen Donoghue for participating in our Memorial Day events. Thank you also to Terry Stader, our Veteran's Agent, for his incredible job of organizing the event. The Apple Blossom festival and parade were also held in May. Thank you to all who organize and participated in these wonderful events which reflect the unique character and specialness of our community.

At a recent Board of Selectmen's meeting, the board presented Terry Stader and Diana Walker-Moyer (a member of the Merrimack Valley Reserves Corps) with Certificates of Appreciation for their efforts and assistance during the Boston Marathon bombing event. Terry managed the amateur radio communications at the MEMA headquarters, and Diana assisted as a volunteer team leader at the finish line.

The Board of Selectmen has opened the warrant for our fall Special Town Meeting which will be held on October 21, 2013. Citizens petitions are due to the Town managers office by September 4th.

Our 3rd annual Strategic Planning Retreat will be held on June 20th at Kimball Farm from 5:30 – 8:30pm. We have some timely issues being discussed including: Economic Development; Education – mandates, budget, and other issues; Town Financial Topics – Capital Planning, Other Post-Employment Benefits, Retirement Assessment, and Bond Rating; and Emergency Planning/Response, Public Safety, and Town/School Building Safety and Security. Much more information is available on our website at this link: [Strategic Planning Retreat](#). I encourage you to review the information and join us for an informative evening. You may RSVP online which helps us prepare in advance.

I am delighted to announce our town's newly refurbished municipal website. Using the same web address [www.westfordma.gov](http://www.westfordma.gov) our new site will improve transparency of local government and make it easier for residents and businesses to navigate our town's robust online features such as online bill paying and permitting. Our website receives approximately 800 visitors each day who view approximately 2,500 pages of information. We recently won the Massachusetts Municipal Association's Award for the best website of a Massachusetts municipality with a population between 15,000 and 49,999. In order to reinforce our website's status as an up-to-date and trusted source of information, we decided to redesign our site, simplify the look of our home page, and improve the ease of navigation. Our new front page has more space for notices and news items, a slide show for images of the town, and bulletins for upcoming events.

(continued on next page)

Our Economic Development Committee held a business breakfast on June 6th at Juniper Networks where we invited the 20 largest employers in Westford. Many of these businesses attended, including Cornerstone Square, Juniper Networks, UTC Aerospace Systems, The Gutierrez Company, Tyco, Red Hat, Sanborn, Head & Associates, Mack Technologies, Courier Westford, Kimball Farm, and Sonus. Our committee proposed the establishment of a Westford Business Association, sought their participation and sponsorship of a Westford Community Brochure, and explained the benefits of the 495 Technology Corridor ETA application that is before the Economic Assistance Coordinating Council next week. We also discussed the selectmen's goal of encouraging "appropriate" business expansion, construction along Route 110 and Minot's Corner, transportation issues, and the commercial and residential development that is currently under construction or being permitted.

Our town recently was awarded a grant of 100 hours of technical assistance from the Northern Middlesex Council of Government (NMCOG), to evaluate solar bylaws and make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen to consider for a future town meeting.

I was greatly saddened to learn that US Army Specialist Mitchell K. Daehling, 24, of Dalton, MA was killed in action on May 14 in Afghanistan, from wounds suffered when enemy forces attacked his unit with explosive devices. I send my deepest condolences to his wife, Samantha (McNamara) Daehling who resides with her parents, John and Sharon Marie McNamara in Westford, and to the rest of his family, friends and loved ones.

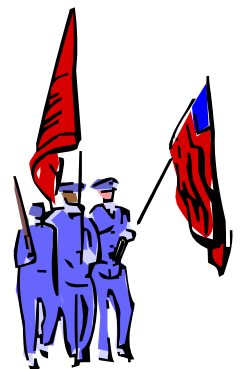
On a positive note, Westford Police Officer Scott Hyder represented our town at the 2013 Special Olympic Summer Games. He accompanied Police Officers from southern NH, Middlesex and Essex County, who formed a convoy to Boston College, and then joined other convoys from all over Massachusetts. An estimated 160 marked units from 80 different agencies headed to the Harvard University Athletic Fields, where they joined hundreds of athletes, family members, spectators and volunteers. The officers were split into groups and assisted at different events.

Congratulations to the Westford Academy Class of 2013! My best wishes to each of you for a prosperous, enriching, exciting future!

Sincerely,



Jodi Ross



## A Message from Christine Collins, Tax Collector-Treasurer

### Office Re-Organization Update

Westford consolidated the Tax Collector and Treasurer's offices into one office in May 2011 when I was hired. The consolidation created opportunities for job sharing and cross training of staff from both offices. Ann McEnnis was the Assistant Treasurer in Westford for many years. She welcomed me when I came here and cheerfully incorporated changes that I made to the Treasurer's office systems over the course of a year. I am grateful to her for her efforts and support during the time that we worked together. Ann became ill in July 2012 and was taken from us in April 2013. We miss her still.

The Tax Collector's office staff was incredibly helpful throughout the transition. Peggy Vennard, a Town of Westford employee for over 30 years was the Office Admin in the Collector's office for the past 12 years. Patricia Studer was the Assistant Tax Collector for the past 12 years. Pat and Peg were willing, wonderful and capable as we reorganized the offices and redistributed the work. Pat continued to work in the Tax Collector's office but also took on added responsibilities from the Treasurer's office. She had to learn payroll processing, tax reporting, accounts payable and more! And she did it with that beautiful big smile on! Peg likes to be busy and it's a good thing! Because she has never been so busy in the Collector's office. Her quick wit and dry sense of humor made it easier to bear when chaos seemed to be breaking out! I was amazed to find long time employees who were so willing to do projects, learn new things and help me navigate through this transition. Sheila Finegan, a part time employee in the Assessor's office began helping us out part time in December 2012. She fit right in and has done a great job! As for myself, I took on some of the tasks from the Asst. Treasurer's position to gain better oversight and strengthen internal controls. All of this allowed us to change the composition of the office. Instead of having four full time employees, we have been able to reduce hours to three full time employees, one part time employee and a small pool of money for "as needed" hours, which will save the town over \$30,000 per year.

The new structure has resulted in two well deserved promotions! Pat Studer has been promoted from the position of Assistant Tax Collector to Assistant Treasurer and Peggy Vennard has been promoted from the position of Office Admin to Assistant Tax Collector. Sheila has been appointed to the Office Admin part time position. I want to publicly say, "THANK YOU!" to my staff for their extraordinary efforts, their kindness toward me and their self sacrifice as we worked everything out here in the Tax Collector-Treasurer's office. We really have a great team. I look forward to the year ahead!



*Left to Right: Peggy, Christine, Pat and Sheila*



## Westford Academy Community Service

### Town - wide litter cleanup

Following Senior Internships, Prom, Disney, and Senior Seminar week, our Westford Academy Seniors took to the streets! Over 100 students participated in a variety of community service activities on June 3rd and 4th. From Habitat for Humanity to Parks and Recreation, they rolled up their sleeves and GAVE BACK to the community that has provided them with a terrific foundation for their future plans. This year the seniors joined forces with the [Litter League](#) for the first time ever, and literally TOOK TO THE STREETS. After meeting with Ellen Harde to highlight a map of Westford, nine teams headed out with a clear bag for recycling and a yellow bag for trash. Sporting bright orange vests, the seniors really got to see what it takes to keep Westford clean AND how easy it was for them to make a difference. What an eye opener for our seniors, and a great opportunity to thank the town of Westford WHILE doing a spring cleaning along the way.



*Westford Academy Community Service volunteers heading out to their cleanup route ...as members of Westford's Litter League*

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## Water Department News



### Out with the old - in with the new

Water meters need to be replaced every 15 years according to accepted performance standards, and the Water Department is happy to report that we are currently up to date (but not done!) with our residential meter replacement program. In fact, we replaced 360 residential water meters this year. This would not be possible without the cooperation of our customers. Accordingly - we would like to express our appreciation to everyone who took time from their busy schedules to provide us access to their meters.

– Thanks!

## J. V. Fletcher Library News

### SUMMER FUN FOR EVERYONE, at the LIBRARY

The Library's Three Summer Reading Programs offer every patron a chance to win prizes, to attend amazing events and to celebrate the joy of reading just for the fun of it.

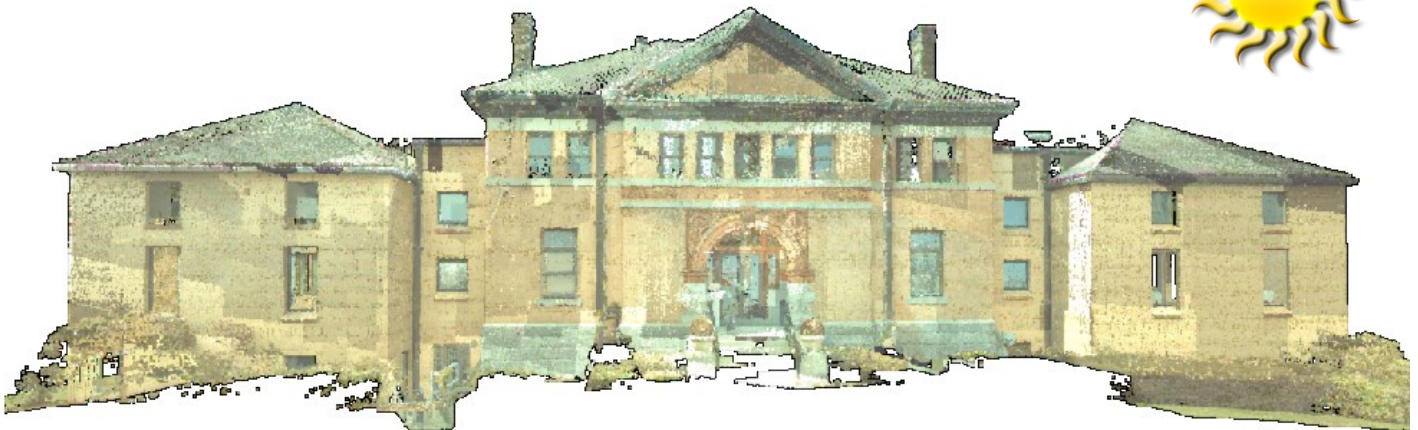
The beauty of our three programs (for Children, for Teens and Tweens and for Adults) is that each one is a win - win proposition. You sign up, and then you decide which weekly events you want to attend based on YOUR summer plans. Further, if you miss a week or two or three you can still come to the final parties, win prizes and enjoy the kind of entertainment that one usually needs to travel to: the city, museums, the Zoo, music festivals, the theatre, or take a course, to experience.

Most Westfordians know how wild and wondrous the Children's and Tween & Teen programs are, this summer is no exception: expect magic, music, carnivals, Star Wars parties, live animals both local and exotic (one program is devoted solely to Wild Cats), Chef food challenges, watercolor workshops and so much more.

But our Adult programs are extremely appealing as well. You can learn how to attract birds, bees and butterflies to your back yard, to track the Eastern Coyote in Urban Massachusetts and you can join our first ever COOKBOOK BOOK CLUB!

Please check out why hundreds have already signed up in less than two weeks. For more information go to our Library Web page at [www.westfordlibrary.org](http://www.westfordlibrary.org), pick up brochures at the Library, or call us!

We can't wait to spend the summer with you!



*3-D Scan provided by Land Tech of Westford*



## Health Department News

### UPPER MERRIMACK VALLEY COMMUNITIES PARTICIPATE IN A PET SHELTER EXERCISE

On April 27th, the Upper Merrimack Valley Medical Reserve Corps (UMVMRC), the Upper Merrimack Public Health Coalition (covering the communities of Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Lowell, Tewksbury, Tyngsboro and Westford), and area animal control officers, participated in a full-scale pet shelter exercise with live animals at the Blanchard Middle School. By partnering with the State of Massachusetts Animal Response Team (SMART), the exercise tested the region's ability to set up and run a pet shelter to house animals during a disaster. This exercise was part of a FEMA grant received on behalf of the UMVMRC, which also funded the supplies for a pet shelter set up in each of the seven communities of the Upper Merrimack Valley.



Designed for accepting companion and service animals of emergency shelter residents, pet shelters are increasingly being integrated into the emergency response plans of local communities. "The number one reason people will not evacuate and go to a shelter is if they are not allowed to bring their pets. Including animals in emergency plans is a matter of public safety." said David Schwartz, Director of SMART.

During the pet shelter exercise, volunteers from the UMVMRC were given training and performed specific job responsibilities within the pet shelter. Local municipal health department, emergency management and animal control staff were included and observed and evaluated the exercise. Ultimately, SMART, Animal Control Officers and the Upper Merrimack Valley MRC tested and proved they could successfully set up a pet shelter that would provide for the safety and security of the residents animals. The collaboration between SMART and the Upper Merrimack Valley MRC will continue as the two organizations address lessons learned from this hands-on exercise.



## **Health Department News**

### **HEALTH DEPARTMENT OFFERS TICK REDUCTION LANDSCAPING PROJECT**

The Westford Health Department is happy to announce a follow up program to our recent Managing Ticks On Your Property seminar conducted earlier this Spring. In taking the next step towards employing many of the landscaping techniques discussed at the spring seminar aimed at reducing tick exposure, the Health Department identified the playground & field located behind the Nabnasset School (Plain Road) and is currently in the process of practicing what we preach! With help from Nashoba Vocational Technical High School students (performing some of the hard labor), RE Johnson Construction Co. (donated & delivered 7.5+ tons of pea stone border), and the cooperation of many other Town Departments & Staff, the fields have begun to be transformed into an environment less conducive to ticks. This is being accomplished by reducing their habitat and creating barriers so as to limit tick encroachment.

This work is being done in addition to the forthcoming installation of permanent information stations in many locations around Town that will contain tick information available to the public 24 hours a day. These information holders are a result of a mini grant recently applied for and awarded to the Health Department. The signs and work are scheduled to be installed by the end of this month so look for them at the Nab School and other locations around Town!

### **DEPARTMENT HOSTS SEPTIC SYSTEM TRAININGS**

The Westford Health Department was happy to host two successful septic system training opportunities recently in Town Hall. The first was entitled Liability Issues For The System Inspector) and was taught by Dan McIntyre (McIntyre Engineering) & Peter R. Marbieri, Esq. (Fletcher Tilton, P.C.) on May 9th, 2013. The second was presented on June 12, 2013 by Kyle Landis of Infiltrator Systems, Inc. and was called Drainfield Malfunctions & Infiltrator Installation Certification. Both trainings counted as Continuing Education Units (CEU's) for area Title 5 professionals and were performed free of charge for all attendees which numbered in excess of 50 participants for both sessions. These are part of our ongoing, local training opportunities being offered here in Westford by your Health Department.

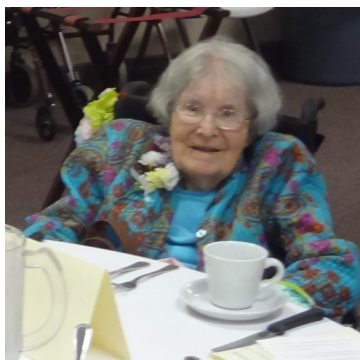
### **WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS EXPO**

The Westford Water and Health departments hosted a successful Environmental Health and Wellness Expo on May 16. The well attended event offered residents an opportunity to visit with many vendors and obtain countless education on numerous environmental and health topics. In addition, Water Department Open House tours, free water conservation kits, giveaways, and 4th and 5th grade student contest winners were presented with prizes for most creative projects.



## Council on Aging - Gay Nineties Luncheon

An annual event held in May (Older American's Month).  
Those wearing corsage or boutonniere are honored guests age 90 and over.





## Police Department News

We are getting lots of calls on Snapping Turtles in the road, like this one, being safely and properly relocated across the street by Officer Hartley.

According to [fisheries and wildlife](#) they are on the move looking for locations to lay eggs. When you observe them, the best thing is to just let them get to the other side of the road. If it's safe to do so and you choose to try and help, you can either stay and protect it while it is crossing or call police. If you know how you can assist it to the other side.

[Westford Animal Control](#) advises to NEVER pick them up by their tail, also a word of caution: Snapping turtles will take a bite of you. Their necks can extend far; so they must be picked up closer to their hind legs, as Officer Hartley is doing. Gloves are definitely recommended. The worst thing to do is to bring it to another location where you think it will be safer, which may in fact, be very harmful to the turtle. As always while operating a vehicle you should be observant of traffic hazards of any kind. Drive safely.



*Officer Derek Hartley*

For more information see: [Mass Audubon - Turtles](#)

### [Electronics Collection](#)

Saturday, June 22, 2013

Westford Highway Garage, 28 North Street

8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

The Westford Recycling Commission hosts three Electronics Recycling events each year in Westford - Spring, June, and September. Westford utilizes the services of Electronics Recyclers International from Holliston, Massachusetts. This is a fee based collection; CASH ONLY. OPEN TO ALL. The Town of Westford receives no proceeds from this event.

**For a fee schedule and more information please [Click Here](#).**

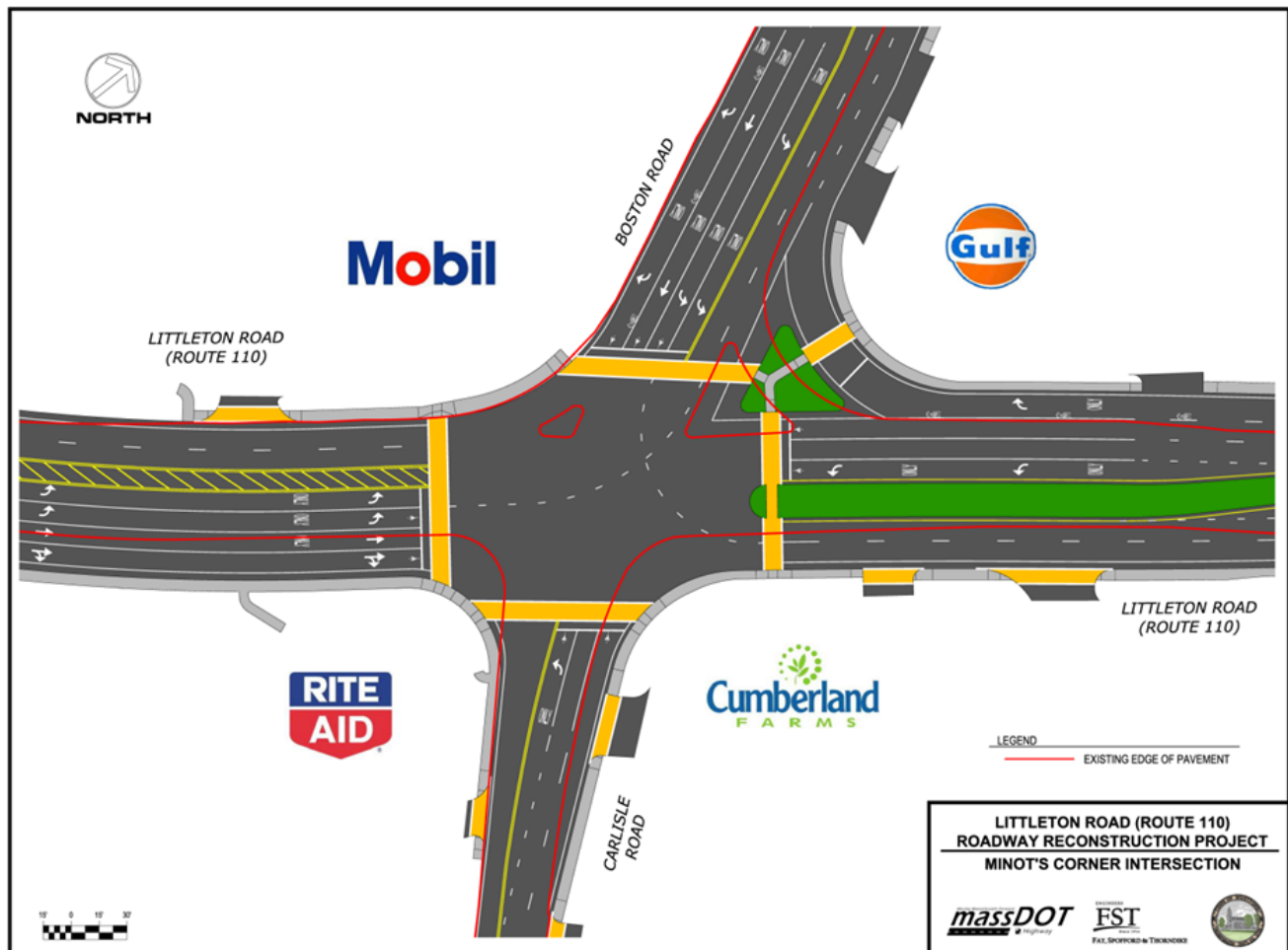


## Engineering Department News

### Minot's Corner to Begin Reconstruction

E.H. Perkins Construction, Inc. has announced that they plan to start construction on the MassDOT Littleton Road (Route 110) Roadway Reconstruction Project early in July. The first phase of work will include mobilizing signs and safety equipment along with erosion control measures to protect the nearby natural resources. Construction of the stormwater basin adjacent to the McDonald's restaurant is scheduled for early August with the first roadway work to begin sometime in mid-August. The contractor anticipates completing the project by April of 2015. Dates, times and schedules are subject to change and updates will be announced as soon as they become available.

Commuters are encouraged to subscribe to the Route 110 (Littleton Road) Construction Notices at [www.westfordma.gov/subscriber](http://www.westfordma.gov/subscriber) or follow project updates on Twitter @Westfordtraffic. Plans, notices and other helpful information can also be found at the [www.westfordma.gov/110](http://www.westfordma.gov/110) website.



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## Engineering Department News (Continued)

### SCOPE OF WORK

The proposed project includes adding an additional travel lane in each direction on Littleton Road (Route 110) from Minot's Comer to Nixon Road. The proposed cross section will be two thru lanes in each direction with a center turning lane. At Minot's Comer, a second thru lane will be added to Littleton Road (Route 110) eastbound to match the wider cross-section beyond Boston Road. The new cross section of this leg of the intersection is proposed to be sufficiently wide enough to support two thru lanes in each direction with three left turning lanes (seven lanes total). Since the need for the third left turn lane is not immediate, the northern left turn lane will be a painted median. When the three left turn lanes are warranted, only the paint in the median will be removed. In addition, two lanes will be added to Boston Road, one that can be converted to an additional receiving lane for the three left turn lanes from Littleton Road (Route 110) and the second to provide for double left turn lanes onto Littleton Road (Route 110).

The proposed project includes milling and resurfacing of existing pavements; full-depth reconstruction in areas of roadway widening; vertical granite curb and a variable width (4-6 feet) concrete sidewalk adjacent to the shoulder on both sides of the roadway; signs and pavement markings; traffic signal system replacements; storm drainage system improvements at the Minot's Comer intersection; and construction of a new closed storm drainage system along Littleton Road (Route 110); and construction of a new twelve (12) inch water main along Littleton Road from Boston/Carlisle Road to the end limit of work.

For more information, please contact the Town Engineer directly at:

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28 North Street  
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Photo Source: bing.com



## Memorial Day 2013

Despite the inclement weather, Memorial Day 2013 services did occur. The parade through the Common was lead by the Westford Academy Band and the Westford Firefighters Pipes and Drums bringing up the rear with plenty of participants in between. Following stops at each of the war memorials around the Common, the service was held inside the center fire station.

Thanks to all the participated in this year's event. We will try and order better weather for next year!



Memorial Day video now online at:

[WESTFORDCAT.ORG](http://WESTFORDCAT.ORG)